



Garfield Primary School

Student engagement and wellbeing policy



Help for non-English speakers

If you need help to understand the information in this policy please contact the school office.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this policy is to ensure that all students and members of our school community understand:

- (a) our commitment to providing a safe and supportive learning environment for students
- (b) expectations for positive student behaviour
- (c) support available to students and families
- (d) our school's policies and procedures for responding to inappropriate student behaviour.

Garfield Primary School is committed to providing a safe, secure and stimulating learning environment for all students. We understand that students reach their full potential only when they are happy, healthy and safe, and that a positive school culture, where student participation is encouraged and valued, helps to engage students and support them in their learning. Our school acknowledges that student wellbeing and student learning outcomes are closely linked.

The objective of this policy is to support our school to create and maintain a safe, supportive and inclusive school environment consistent with our school's values.

SCOPE

This policy applies to all school activities, including camps and excursions.

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2. School values, philosophy and vision
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POLICY

1. School profile

Garfield Primary School was established in 1886 and is located approximately 70 kilometres south-east of Melbourne. We have approximately 150 students enrolled from Foundation to Year Six and 15 school staff members including a school chaplain and a wellbeing team.

Our school ground are within the heart of Garfield, surrounded by a supportive community and most students that attend our school live locally. Garfield Primary School has developed close ties to the local community, and enjoys support from our local shops and community services.

At the time of creating this policy, 100% of our students came from families where English was wither the primary or the only language spoken. The school has strong ties with our Koorie community with Koorie student leaders and close ties with our Koorie Educational Support Officer. We are proud of our diversity and inclusive school community.

We strive to provide a nurturing and challenging environment that empowers students to reach their personal best, both academically and socially.



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2. School values, philosophy and vision

Garfield Primary School's values, motto and mission are all integral to the work that we do. Students, staff and members of our school community are encouraged to live and demonstrate our core values of being a safe and respectful learner at all times. These values are consistently modelled, acknowledged and celebrated by our team of staff.

Our school is committed to providing a safe, secure and stimulating learning environment, where risk of harm is minimised and students feel physically and emotionally secure. Our school acknowledges that student welfare and student learning outcomes are inextricably linked and that within our school community students have a wide range of needs that require additional support.

Our school's mission is 'Garfield Primary School will strive to ensure all students learn the necessary academic, social and emotional skills to become positive members of society and the community.'

Our staff work collaboratively in Professional learning Teams, meeting regularly to monitor student learning outcomes as well as the effectiveness of their teaching practice. They strive to create quality and engaging teaching and learning programs that are meeting the needs; academic, social and emotional, of all students.

3. Wellbeing and engagement strategies

Garfield Primary School has developed a range of strategies to promote engagement, an inclusive and safe environment, positive behaviour, and respectful relationships for all students in our school. We recognise the importance of student friendships and peer support in helping children and students feel safe, supported, valued and included. We acknowledge that some students may need extra social, emotional or educational support at school, and that the needs of students will change over time as they grow and learn.

A summary of the universal (whole of school), targeted (year group specific) and individual engagement strategies used by our school is included below:

Universal

- A School-Wide Positive Behaviour Support (SWPBS) framework is embedded throughout the school to explicitly teach and model our core values of being a safe and respectful learner as well as the expectations that sit alongside of these. Positive behaviour and student achievement is acknowledged in the classroom, and formally in school assemblies and communication to parents
- high and consistent expectations of all staff, students and parents and carers
- prioritise positive relationships between staff and students, recognising the fundamental role this plays in building and sustaining student wellbeing
- creating a culture that is inclusive, engaging and supportive and that embraces and celebrates diversity and empowers all students to participate and feel valued
- welcoming all parents/carers and being responsive to them as partners in learning
- analysing and being responsive to a range of school data such as attendance, Attitudes to School Survey, parent survey data and school level assessment data
- teachers at Garfield Primary School use an instructional framework to ensure an explicit, common and shared model of instruction to ensure that evidenced-based, high yield teaching practices are incorporated into all lessons
- teachers at Garfield Primary School work in collaborative Professional Learning Teams (PLTs) to work through regular Inquiry Cycles, analysing student data to plan teaching and learning programs that are responsive to the needs of all students. PLTs adopt a broad range of teaching and assessment approaches to effectively respond to the diverse learning styles, strengths and needs of our students and follow the standards set by the Victorian Institute of Teaching



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- *carefully planned transition programs to support students moving into different stages of their schooling*
- *monitor student attendance and implement attendance improvement strategies at a whole-school, cohort and individual level*
- *staff are in the early stages of developing an understanding of the Respectful Relationships initiative in order to begin implementing in classrooms soon*
- *students have the opportunity to contribute to and provide feedback on decisions about school operations through the Student Representative Council. Students are also encouraged to speak with their teachers and Principal whenever they have any questions or concerns.*
- *A Prep buddy program*

Targeted

- *Koorie students are supported to engage fully in their education, in a positive learning environment that understands and appreciates the strength of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander culture. Each Koorie student has an Individual Education Plan to ensure that our approaches are targeted and responsive to their needs. Student Support Group (SSG) meetings are held regularly.*
- *At the time of drafting this policy, No English as an Additional Language (EAL) students were enrolled at Garfield Primary School. However, any future EAL students will be supported through an Individual Learning Plan where necessary, and all cultural and linguistically diverse students are supported to feel safe and included in our school including through*
- *we will support learning and wellbeing outcomes of students from refugee background through a range of strategies as necessary including Individual Learning Plans, trauma informed teaching practices and Chaplaincy support.*
- *we will provide a positive and respectful learning environment for our students who identify as LGBTIQ+ and follow the Department's policy on [LGBTIQ Student Support \[insert any specific measures at your school to support LGBTIQ+ students\]](#)*
- *all students in Out of Home Care are supported in accordance with the Department's policy on [Supporting Students in Out-of-Home Care](#) including being appointed a Learning Mentor, having an Individual Education Plan and a Student Support Group (SSG) and being referred to Student Support Services for an Educational Needs Assessment*
- *students with a disability are supported to be able to engage fully in their learning and school activities in accordance with the Department's policy on [Students with Disability](#), such as through reasonable adjustments to support access to learning programs, consultation with families and where required, regular Student Support Group meetings and Individual Learning Plans*
- *staff will apply a trauma-informed approach to working with students who have experienced trauma*
- *students enrolled under the Department's international student program are supported in accordance with our legal obligations and Department policy and guidelines at: [International Student Program](#)*

Individual

Garfield Primary School implements a range of strategies that support and promote individual engagement. These can include:

- *building constructive relationships with students at risk or students who are vulnerable due to complex individual circumstances*
- *meeting with students and their parent/carer to talk about how best to help the student engage with school*
- *developing an Individual Learning Plan and/or a Positive Behaviour Support Plan*
- *considering if any environmental changes need to be made, for example changing the classroom set up*



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- *referral to the school Chaplain*
- *referring the student to:*
 - *school-based wellbeing supports*
 - *Student Support Services*
 - *Appropriate external supports such as allied health professionals ie headspace, child and adolescent mental health services, ChildFirst or The Orange Door*
 - *Re-engagement programs such as Navigator*

Where necessary the school will support the student's family to engage by:

- *being responsive and sensitive to changes in the student's circumstances and health and wellbeing*
- *collaborating, where appropriate and with the support of the student and their family, with any external allied health professionals, services or agencies that are supporting the student*
- *monitoring individual student attendance and developing an Attendance Improvement Plans in collaboration with the student and their family*
- *engaging with our regional Koorie Engagement Support Officers*
- *running regular Student Support Group meetings for all students:*
 - *with a disability*
 - *in Out of Home Care*
 - *with other complex needs that require ongoing support and monitoring.*

4. Identifying students in need of support

Garfield Primary School is committed to providing the necessary support to ensure our students are supported intellectually, emotionally and socially. The School-Wide Positive Behaviour Support (SWPBS) team oversees student wellbeing and plays a significant role in developing and implementing strategies help identify students in need of support and enhance student wellbeing. Garfield Primary School will utilise the following information and tools to identify students in need of extra emotional, social or educational support:

- *personal, health and learning information gathered upon enrolment and while the student is enrolled*
- *attendance records*
- *academic performance*
- *observations by school staff such as changes in engagement, behaviour, self-care, social connectedness and motivation*
- *attendance, behavioural and suspension data*
- *engagement with families*

5. Student rights and responsibilities

All members of our school community have a right to experience a safe and supportive school environment. We expect that all students, staff, parents and carers treat each other with respect and dignity. Our school's values and expectations, outlined within our matrix of expectations, reflect the rights and responsibilities of members of our community.

Students have the right to:

- *participate fully in their education*
- *feel safe, secure and happy at school*
- *learn in an environment free from bullying, harassment, violence, racism, discrimination or intimidation*
- *express their ideas, feelings and concerns.*



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Students have the responsibility to:

- participate fully in their educational program
- display positive behaviours that demonstrate respect for themselves, their peers, their teachers and members of the school community
- display positive behaviours that demonstrate a commitment to the safety of themselves, their peers, their teachers and members of the school community
- respect the right of others to learn.

Students who may have a complaint or concern about something that has happened at school are encouraged to speak to their parents or carers and approach a trusted teacher or a member of the school leadership team. Further information about raising a complaint or concern is available in our Complaints Policy.

6. Student behavioural expectations and management

Behavioural expectations of students are grounded in our school's matrix of expectations.

Violence, bullying, and other offensive and harmful behaviours such as racism, harassment and discrimination will not be tolerated and will be managed in accordance with this our SWPBS handbook and our Bullying Prevention Policy

When a student acts in breach of the behaviour standards of our school community, Garfield Primary School will institute a staged response, consistent with the Department's policies on behaviour, discipline and student wellbeing and engagement. Where appropriate, parents will be informed about the inappropriate behaviour and the disciplinary action taken by Teachers and other school staff.

Our school considers, explores and implements positive and non-punitive interventions to support student behaviour before considering disciplinary measures such as withdrawal of privileges, withdrawal from class or suspension.

Disciplinary measures may be used as part of a staged response to inappropriate behaviour in combination with other engagement and support strategies to ensure that factors that may have contributed to the student's behaviour are identified and addressed. Disciplinary measures at our school will be applied fairly and consistently. Students will always be provided with an opportunity to be heard.

Disciplinary measures that may be applied include:

- *warning a student that their behaviour is inappropriate*
- *teacher controlled consequences such as moving a student in a classroom or other reasonable and proportionate responses to misbehaviour*
- *withdrawal of privileges*
- *referral to the Principal*
- *restorative practices*
- *behaviour support and intervention meetings*
- *suspension*
- *expulsion*

Suspension, expulsion and restrictive interventions are measures of last resort and may only be used in situations consistent with Department policy, available at:

- <https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/suspensions/policy>
- <https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/expulsions/policy>
- <https://www2.education.vic.gov.au/pal/restraint-seclusion/policy>



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In line with Ministerial Order 1125, no student aged 8 or younger will be expelled without the approval of the Secretary of the Department of Education and Training.

The Principal of Garfield Primary School is responsible for ensuring all suspensions and expulsions are recorded on CASES21.

Corporal punishment is prohibited by law and will not be used in any circumstance at our school.

7. Engaging with families

Garfield Primary School values the input of parents and carers, and we will strive to support families to engage in their child's learning and build their capacity as active learners. We aim to be partners in learning with parents and carers in our school community.

We work hard to create successful partnerships with parents and carers by:

- ensuring that all parents have access to our school policies and procedures, available on our school website
- maintaining an open and respectful line of communication between parents and staff
- providing parent volunteer opportunities so that families can contribute to school activities
- involving families with homework and other curriculum-related activities
- involving families in school decision making
- coordinating resources and services from the community for families
- including families in Student Support Groups, and developing individual plans for students.

8. Evaluation

Garfield Primary School will collect data each year to understand the frequency and types of wellbeing issues that are experienced by our students so that we can measure the success or otherwise of our school-based strategies and identify emerging trends or needs.

Sources of data that will be assessed on an annual basis include:

- student survey data
- behavioural data
- school reports
- parent survey
- CASES21, including attendance and absence data
- SOCS

Example school will also regularly monitor available data dashboards to ensure any wellbeing or engagement issues are acted upon in a timely manner and any intervention occurs as soon as possible.

COMMUNICATION

This policy will be communicated to our school community in the following ways:

- Available publicly on our school's website
- Included in staff induction processes
- Included in transition and enrolment packs
- Made available in hard copy from school administration upon request



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Our school will also ensure it follows the mandatory parent/carer notification requirements with respect to suspensions and expulsions outlined in the Department's policies at:

- [Suspension process](#)
- [Expulsions - Decision](#)

FURTHER INFORMATION AND RESOURCES

The following Department of Education and Training policies are relevant to this Student Engagement and Wellbeing Policy:

- [Attendance](#)
- [Student Engagement](#)
- [Child Safe Standards](#)
- [Supporting Students in Out-of-Home Care](#)
- [Students with Disability](#)
- [LGBTIQ Student Support](#)
- [Behaviour - Students](#)
- [Suspensions](#)
- [Expulsions](#)
- [Restraint and Seclusion](#)

The following school policies are also relevant to this Student Wellbeing and Engagement Policy:

- Child Safety Policy
- Bullying Prevention Policy

POLICY REVIEW AND APPROVAL

Policy last reviewed	June, 2022
Consultation	School Council – Friday, June 24 th 2022 School community through school newsletter – Friday, June 24 th 2022
Approved by	Principal – Daniel Forster
Next scheduled review date	June, 2024